

great degree of solemnity in thinking on the delights or the supports of religion, after he has seen them reduced into all the forms of eating and drinking. In such detailed analogies it often happens, that the most fanciful, or that the coarsest points of the resemblance, remain longest in the thoughts. When the mind has been taught to descend to a low manner of considering divine truth, it will be apt to descend to the lowest. There is no such violent tendency to abstraction and sublimity, in the minds of the generality of readers and hearers, as to render it necessary to take any great pains for the purpose of retaining their ideas in some degree of alliance with matter.

We are to acknowledge, then, the serious disadvantage under which evangelical religion presents itself to persons of mental refinement, with the associations which it has contracted from its uncultivated and injudicious professors. At the same time, it would be unjust not to observe that some Christians, of a subordinate intellectual order, are distinguished by such an unassuming simplicity, by so much rectitude of conscience, and by a piety so warm and even exalted, as to leave a cultivated man convicted of a great perversion of feeling, if the faith, of which these are living representatives, did not appear to him in stronger attractive association with their excellence, than in repulsive association with their intellectual inferiority. But I am *supposing* his mind to be in a perverted state, and am far from seeking to defend him. This supposition however being made, I feel no surprise, on surveying the prevailing mental condition of evangelical communities, that this man has acquired an accumulation of prejudices against some of the distinguishing features of the gospel. Permitting himself to feel as if the circumstances which thus diminish or distort an order of Christian sentiments, were inseparable from it, he is inclined to regret that there should be any divine sanctions against his framing for himself, on the foundation of some selected principles in Christianity which he cannot but admire, but with a qualifying intermixture of foreign elements, a more liberalized scheme of religion.

It was especially unfortunate if, in the advanced stage of this man's perhaps highly cultivated youth, while he was exulting in the conscious enlargement of intellect, and the quickening and vivid perceptiveness of taste, but was still to